

Variation in Legislative Mandates for Follow-Up Imaging After Lung and Breast Cancer Screening



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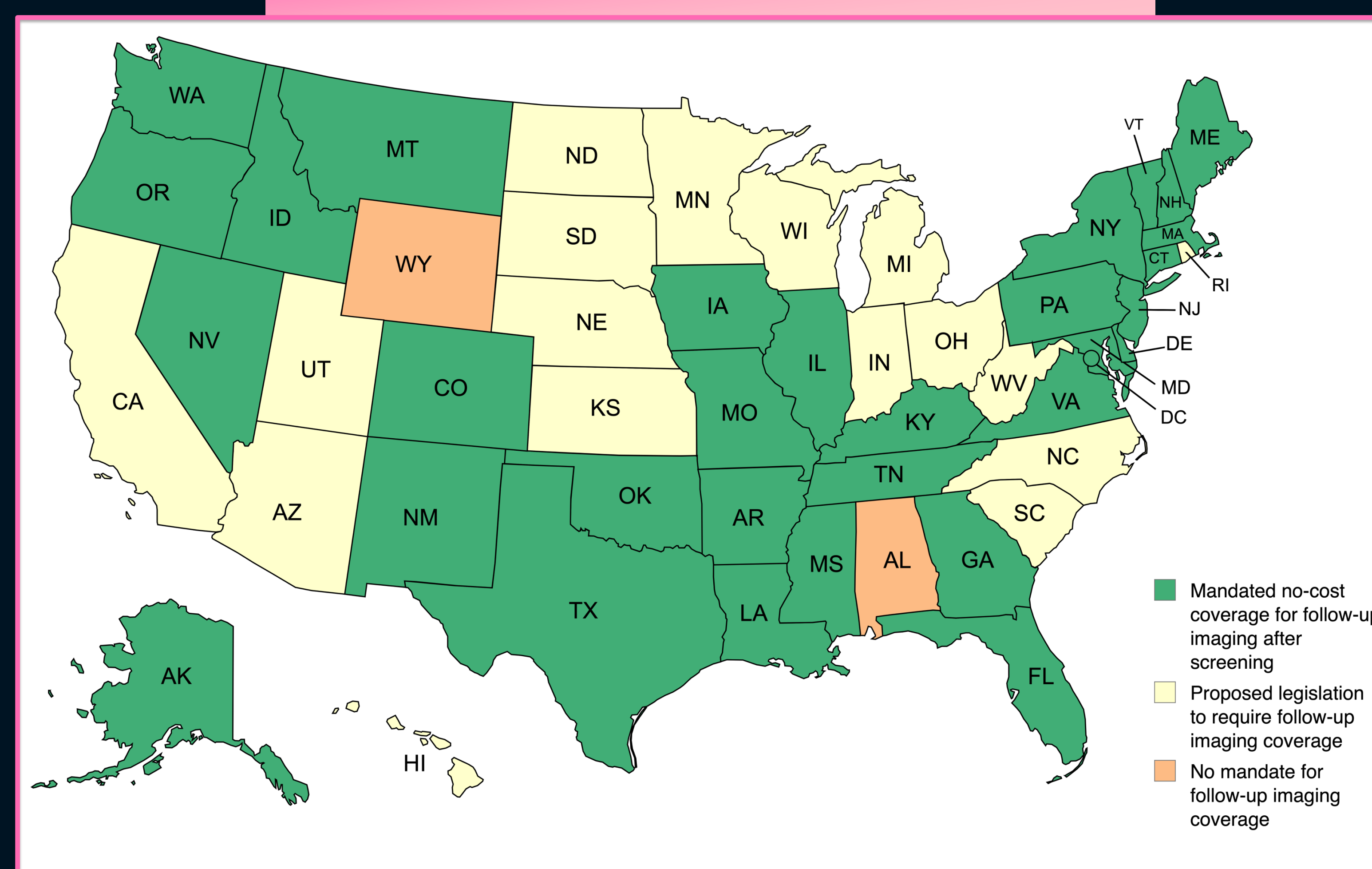
Background

- Lung and breast cancer are the leading causes of cancer incidence and mortality in the United States.
- Imaging-based screening enables early detection and reduces mortality, as shown in large clinical trials.
- Although insurance plans are required by the Affordable Care Act to cover the screening exams without cost sharing, diagnostic follow-up coverage is not federally mandated; thus, follow-up coverage is currently determined by state-level legislation.
- We assessed variation in state-level insurance mandates for diagnostic follow-up imaging coverage following lung and breast cancer screening.

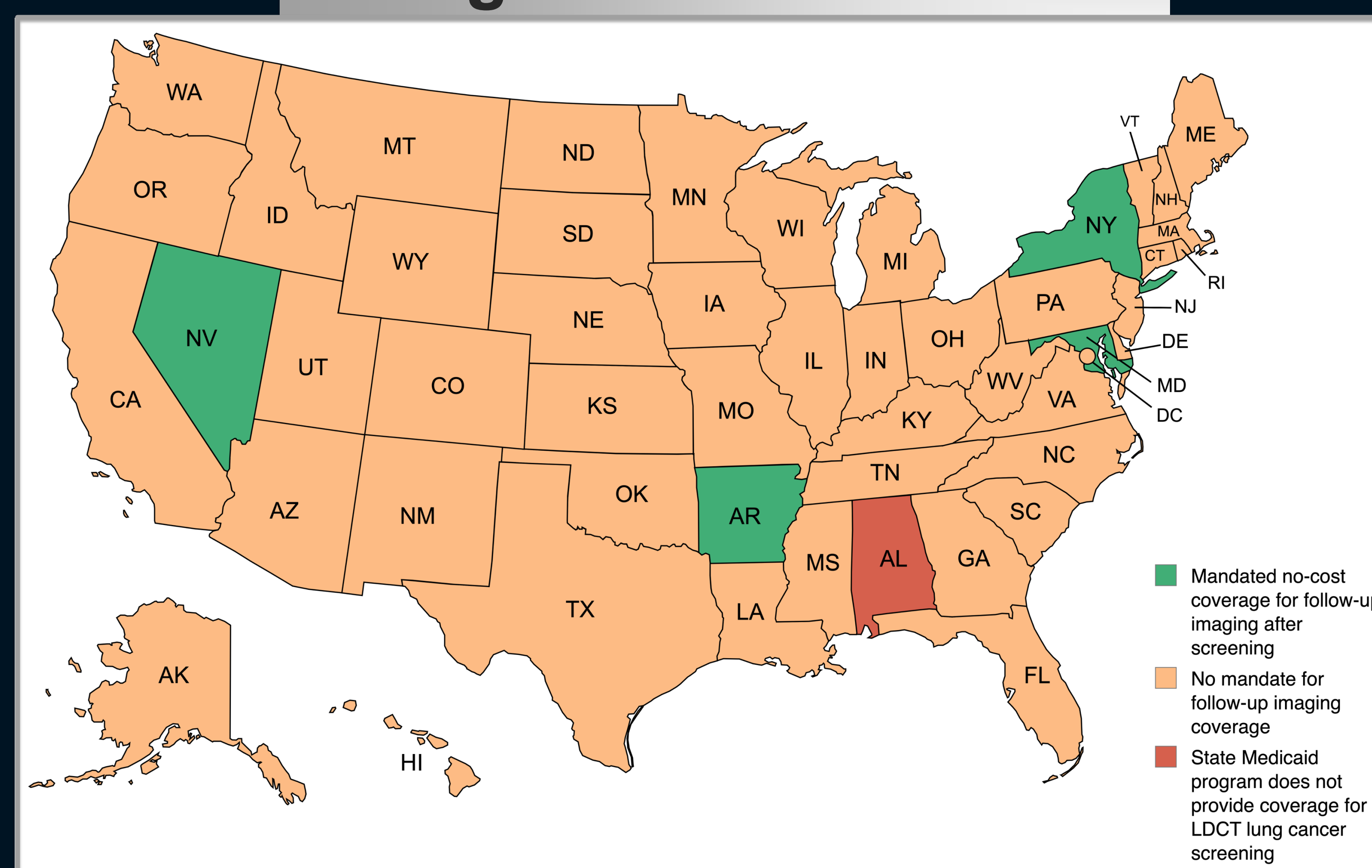
Methods

- Systematic review of state legislative websites and statutory databases to identify insurance mandates for diagnostic follow-up imaging after screening (data cutoff: January 1, 2026).
- States categorized by legislative status: enacted mandates vs. proposed/pending legislation.
- Extracted variables included cancer type and scope of coverage for follow-up imaging.
- Federal legislative activity was reviewed to contextualize state-level findings.

Breast Cancer Mandates



Lung Cancer Mandates



At the federal level, the *Find It Early Act* has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to require insurance coverage of follow-up breast cancer imaging, while no comparable legislation exists for follow-up lung cancer imaging.

Discussion

- As of January 1, 2026, only **4 states** (representing 9.5% of the population) mandate insurance coverage for diagnostic follow-up imaging after lung cancer screening.
- No states** have pending or proposed legislation addressing insurance mandates for lung cancer screening.
- In contrast, **31 states and DC** (representing 63.4% of the population) mandate coverage of diagnostic follow-up imaging after screening mammogram.
- 17 states** have proposed legislation addressing insurance mandates for breast cancer screening.

Conclusions

- Mandates requiring coverage for follow-up imaging after screening are substantially more widespread for breast than lung cancer screening.
- Without federal requirements, state legislation drives coverage and leaves patients undergoing lung cancer screening comparatively under-protected.
- The potential for hidden costs to these patients is a barrier to care and may prevent eligible patients from undergoing lung cancer screening.
- Policy expansion is needed to support timely diagnostic evaluation after abnormal screening which could improve cancer outcomes.